

ABOUT THE HVCCT

The HVCCT is one of the leading psychotherapy practices in the Hudson Valley region and adheres to the philosophy that the client's well-being is the top priority. Our therapists treat their clients with respect and warmth while also utilizing state-of-the-art methods. Our therapists accept the responsibility of providing quality care and aim to help their clients to address their problems with an effective, hopeful, and engaging approach.

Therapists at the HVCCT work with children, adolescents, adults, couples, and families. Some of their areas of specialization include the following:

- Depression and Mood Disorders
- Anxiety (Panic, OCD, Social Anxiety, Phobias, Worry)
- PTSD / Trauma / Abuse Issues
- Family Therapy and Marital / Relationship Issues
- Insomnia / Sleep Difficulties
- Academic / Learning Difficulties
- Child & Adult Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD/ADHD)
- Anger Management
- Impulse Control Difficulties (e.g., Hair Pulling)
- Grieving and Loss

PARENT TRAINING

For parents with a child in therapy, parent training is offered to help reinforce the strategies their child is learning.

TESTING SERVICES

Areas of assessment include intelligence, academic / learning disabilities, developmental disabilities, personality and emotional issues, and pre-surgical evaluations for gastric bypass/bariatric surgery candidates.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Hudson Valley Center for Cognitive Therapy
Director: Dr. Christine Ziegler
421 N. Highland Avenue, Upper Nyack, NY 10960
(845) 353-3399, Fax: (845) 353-2272
Email: info@hvcct.com, Web: www.hvcct.com

Hudson Valley Center for Cognitive Therapy
421 North Highland Avenue
Upper Nyack, NY 10960

1/08

Child & Adolescent Anxiety

A New Approach to Treatment

Panic Attacks (Agoraphobia)

Chronic Worry

Social Anxiety

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Post-Traumatic Stress

Phobias



Mood & Anxiety Disorders • Substance Abuse • Sexual/Relationship Issues

IS ANXIETY HOLDING YOUR CHILD BACK?

"All of my friends are going to a sleepover party this weekend. I really want to go but I am nervous that once I get there I won't feel well and will want to go home. Last time my parents had to come to get me and I was so embarrassed. I wish I could be like the other kids and just go and have fun."

CHILD & ADOLESCENT ANXIETY

All children experience anxiety. Anxiety in children is expected and normal at specific times in development. However, if your child's fear is interfering with his/her daily life (e.g., sleep, school performance, social activities) or your family's life, then you may want to consider seeking professional help for your child.

Anxiety manifests differently among children. Some children are often overtly tense or uptight. Some may seek a lot of reassurance that everything is "OK." Some anxious children are quiet, compliant, and eager to please, making their difficulties easily missed. Still others are very overcontrolled, intolerant of taking risks, and are very uncomfortable with uncertainty and unpredictability. Below are some types of anxiety common in children:

Excessive Worry: Frequent and intense worry about a variety of issues (e.g., upcoming events, school, health, grades, sports, world events).

Separation Anxiety: Recurrent thoughts and fears about the safety of themselves and/or their parents/caretakers and reluctance to be away from them.

Phobias: Extreme, irrational fears about a specific thing or situation (e.g., animals, storms, the dark, water, blood, etc.).

Social Anxiety: Intense fear of social or performance-related situations, often leading to dread or avoidance.

CHILD & ADOLESCENT ANXIETY (CONT'D)

Panic Attacks: Abrupt onset of intense anxiety usually accompanied by a number of physical sensations, (e.g., palpitations, sweating, stomach upset, shaking, etc.).

Obsessive Compulsive Behaviors: Recurrent and intrusive thoughts (e.g., contamination, doubting oneself, needing to have things in a particular order, or aggressive impulses) that are often accompanied by an overwhelming need to perform repetitive behaviors or rituals (e.g., hand washing, ordering, checking, praying, counting, repeating words silently) to prevent a feared event.

COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY: A PRACTICAL AND EFFECTIVE TREATMENT

Cognitive-behavioral therapy, commonly referred to as CBT, is one of the most state-of-the-art and extensively researched methods of psychotherapy. CBT is based on the idea that changing negative thinking patterns and self-defeating behaviors can have a powerful effect on how we feel.

CBT FOR ANXIETY

We realize that every child is different and a treatment plan will be tailored and individualized for your child. Recent research in treating anxiety suggests that there are a number of skills that children can learn that tend to alleviate anxiety and fear. These skills include:

Reframing Their Thinking: A major component of CBT is to help children challenge their threatening and dangerous perceptions. Children are taught that their thoughts are not facts but rather perceptions that need to be questioned and eventually tested out to see if they are accurate. Specifically, we strive to help children learn to:

- Identify and modify the tendency to think of the worst case scenario (i.e., catastrophic thinking)
- Better assess risk & danger (e.g., "What is the probability the feared event will actually happen?")

CBT FOR ANXIETY (CONT'D)

- Learn how to think through a problem rather than react purely on emotion
- Increase confidence that they can handle whatever comes their way (e.g., "If the feared event happens, how would you deal with it?")
- Strengthen problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Increase tolerance of uncertainty and unpredictability
- Change their relationship with anxiety (e.g., not to "fear the fear" but rather to "face the fear")

Physical Control: Children are taught breathing and relaxation exercises to help them learn how to calm their body down when they are in distress.

Combating Avoidance Behavior: After the child has gained the skills to better manage their anxiety, they are taught through the process of exposure to gradually enter situations that they formerly avoided. Anxious children (and adults) avoid situations they fear, and that avoidance often makes things worse by strengthening the anxiety. Therefore, therapists help the child overcome avoidance by gradually facing what is feared. They gradually begin to test out their "catastrophic" thoughts that the worst will happen and start to substitute more realistic thinking. Moreover, as they confront situations and they face their fears, their self-confidence builds as they begin to believe that they can manage and overcome their fear.

Parent Coaching: It is helpful for parents and caregivers to be aware of what their child is learning in therapy so that these skills can be reinforced at home or in school. Parents learn how to support and encourage their child to face their fears and master their anxiety. They also learn strategies to manage their child's anxiety without giving in to and ultimately reinforcing their child's unrealistic fears.